

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 L-03

SS-15 NSC-05 XMB-02 TRSE-00 EUR-12 /072 W

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R 120630Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5440

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS: EAIR ETRD CE TH

SUBJECT: CIVIAR: AIR CEYLON'S AGREEMENT WITH AIR SIAM

REF: A) BANGKOK 21482, B) COLOMBO 2606

1. IN A CONVERSATION ON AUGUST 11, AIR CEYLON GENERAL MANAGER E. WICKREMARATNE CONFIRMED THAT AIR CEYLON HAS ENTERED INTO A LEASING ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PART-TIME USE OF AIR SIAM'S DC-10. BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1, THE DC-10 WILL BE USED FOR A ONCE-A-WEEK FLIGHT BANGKOK-COLOMBO-BAHRAIN-ZURICH-PARIS AND RETURN USING AIR SIAM FLIGHT CREWS AND AIR CEYLON CABIN PERSONNEL. THE AIRCRAFT WILL RETAIN AIR SIAM COLORS BUT WILL CARRY AN AIR CEYLON STICKER. APART FROM THIS ONE WEEKLY FLIGHT, THE DC-10 WILL REMAIN IN REGULAR AIR SIAM SERVICE.

2. WICKREMARATNE SAID THE PARIS FLIGHT WOULD BE TESTED FOR SIX MONTHS. AT THE END OF THAT TIME, THE POSSIBILITY OF USING THE DC-10, AND POSSIBLY AIR SIAM'S 747, ON OTHER AIR CEYLON ROUTES WOULD BE CONSIDERED.

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IN THE MEANTIME, AIR CEYLON IS PLANNING TO SHAFT THE KARACHI-PARIS LEG OF ITS PRESENT DC-8 COLOMBO-

KARACHI-PARIS-LONDON FLIGHT FROM PARIS TO FRANKFURT.

3. WICKREMARATNE SAID THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF
AIR CEYLON PURCHASING A WIDEBODIED AIRCRAFT IN THE
FORESEEABLE FUTURE. DESPITE A ONE MILLION DOLLAR
LOAN FROM THE GSL, AIR CEYLON IS STILL FINANCIALLY
VERY WEAK. WHILE AIR CEYLON WOULD LIKE TO LEASE OR
PURCHASE A 727-TYPE AIRCRAFT FOR REGIONAL SERVICE,
IT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DO SO UNTIL IT CAN SELL ITS
UNECONOMICAL TRIDENT. SO, FAR, ALL EFFORTS TO UNLOAD
THE TRIDENT HAVE FAILED.
REED

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